

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for sucking liquid, comprising:

a plurality of liquid suction portions;

a pump mechanism capable of sucking a fluid; and

a multiple valve ~~a switching valve~~ connected to said each liquid suction portion portions via a plurality of channels and to said ~~the~~ pump mechanism ~~[[,]]~~ via a single channel; and

a chamber disposed in each of said plurality of channels wherein said multiple valve has means for switching said plurality of channels in order to communicate a specific number of said liquid suction portions with said pump mechanism during liquid suction. ~~the switching valve causes the pump mechanism to be placed in communication with a specific number of the liquid suction portions, and switches the communication at certain time intervals during liquid suction.~~

2. (Currently Amended) The apparatus for sucking liquid according to claim 1, further comprising:

a rotational valve for switching said channels, wherein said rotational valve is rotated at certain time intervals. ~~a plurality of chambers disposed on channels that connect the plurality of liquid suction portions and the switching valve.~~

3. (Currently Amended) The apparatus for sucking liquid according to claim ~~[[2]]~~ 1, further comprising:

a channel-opening/closing switching valve disposed in each of said plurality of channels between each of said liquid suction portions and each of said chambers for switching controlling the communication of each of said ~~a channel that connects the liquid suction portion portions and~~

each of said ~~the chamber~~ chambers by the opening/closing each of said channels.

4. (Currently Amended) The apparatus for sucking liquid according to claim 1, further comprising: ~~wherein a liquid including nucleic acid is sucked, the apparatus comprising:~~

a plurality of nucleic acid capturing containers communicating individually with the plurality of liquid suction portions, and having a carrier capable of capturing nucleic acid ~~when a liquid including nucleic acid is applied to each of said nucleic acid capturing containers.~~

5. (Currently Amended) The apparatus for sucking liquid according to claim 1, further comprising:

a plurality of nucleic acid capturing containers communicating individually with the plurality of liquid suction portions, and having a carrier capable of capturing nucleic acid when ~~wherein a liquid including whole blood, urine, and/or blood serum is applied to each of said nucleic acid capturing containers. to be sucked comprises a sample including whole blood, urine, and/or blood serum.~~

6. (Canceled)

7. (Currently Amended) The apparatus for sucking liquid according to claim ~~[[2]]~~ 1, wherein

the capacity of ~~the chamber is not less than ten times the volume of a~~ each of said chambers is at least ten times larger in volume than the volume of said liquid to be sucked.

8. (Currently Amended) The apparatus for sucking liquid according to claim ~~[[2]]~~ 1, wherein

the portion of each of said plurality of channels that connects said multiple valve to said chambers has a larger internal diameter than the portion of each of said plurality of channels that connects said chambers to said liquid suction portions. ~~wherein a channel that connects the liquid suction portion and the chamber is thinner than a channel that connects the chamber and the~~

~~switching valve.~~

9. (Withdrawn) An apparatus for sucking liquid, comprising:

a plurality of liquid suction portions;

a plurality of chambers individually connecting to each liquid suction portion;

a pump mechanism capable of controlling the pressure of the inside of each chamber;

a first channel opening/closing valve for controlling the communication of channels connecting each liquid suction portion and each chamber; and

a second channel opening/closing valve for controlling the communication of channels connecting each chamber and the pump mechanism.

10. (Withdrawn) The apparatus for sucking liquid according to claim 9, wherein a liquid including nucleic acid is sucked, the apparatus comprising:

a plurality of nucleic acid capturing containers communicating individually with the plurality of liquid suction portions, and having a carrier capable of capturing nucleic acid.

11. (Withdrawn) The apparatus for sucking liquid according to claim 9, wherein the capacity of the chamber is not less than ten times the volume of a liquid to be sucked.

12. (Withdrawn) An apparatus for sucking liquid, comprising: a plurality of liquid suction portions;

a plurality of chambers connecting individually to each liquid suction portion;

a pump mechanism capable of controlling the pressure of the inside of each chamber;

a channel opening/closing valve for controlling the opening/closing of channels connecting each liquid suction portion and each chamber; and

a plurality of check valves for passing fluids only in the direction from the chambers to the pump mechanism, the plurality of check valves being disposed on channels that connect each chamber and the pump mechanism.

13. (Withdrawn) The apparatus for sucking liquid according to claim 12, wherein a liquid including nucleic acid is sucked, the apparatus comprising:

a plurality of nucleic acid capturing containers communicating individually with the plurality of liquid suction portions, and having a carrier capable of capturing nucleic acid.

14. (Withdrawn) The apparatus for sucking liquid according to claim 12, wherein

the capacity of the chamber is not less than ten times the volume of a liquid to be sucked.

15. (Withdrawn) A liquid suction method for sucking a liquid from a plurality of liquid suction portions using a pump mechanism capable of sucking a liquid, wherein

while the pump mechanism is being driven, the liquid suction portions placed in communication with the pump mechanism are switched at certain time intervals, whereby a liquid is sucked from each liquid suction portion substantially in a simultaneous manner.

16. (Withdrawn) The liquid suction method according to claim 15, wherein

a chamber is disposed on channels that individually connect each liquid suction portion and the pump mechanism, the chamber having a capacity not less than ten times the volume of a liquid to be sucked.

17. (Withdrawn) The liquid suction method according to claim 15, wherein

a channel that connects the liquid suction portion and the chamber is thinner than a channel that connects the chamber and the pump mechanism.

18. (Withdrawn) The liquid suction method according to claim 15, wherein

a liquid to be sucked comprises a sample including whole blood, urine, and/or blood serum.

19. (Withdrawn) The liquid suction method according to claim 18, wherein

nucleic acid capturing containers provided with a solid phase capable of capturing nucleic acid are caused to communicate with the plurality of liquid suction portions, and nucleic acid is captured on the solid phase by sucking a liquid from each liquid suction portion.

20. (Withdrawn) A liquid suction method for sucking a liquid, using a plurality of chambers to individually communicate with a plurality of liquid suction portions, and a pump mechanism capable of controlling the pressure of each chamber, wherein a liquid is sucked from each liquid suction portion, the method comprising the steps of:

blocking each liquid suction portion and each chamber, switching the communication between each chamber and the pump mechanism, and then driving the pump mechanism thereby depressurizing each chamber; and

causing each depressurized chamber to come into communication with each liquid suction portion and sucking a liquid.

21. (Withdrawn) The liquid suction method according to claim 20, comprising the step of:

in a state such that each liquid suction portion and each chamber are in communication, switching the communication between each chamber and the pump mechanism at certain time intervals, driving the pump mechanism, thereby sucking a liquid from each liquid suction portion.

22. (Withdrawn) The liquid suction method according to claim 20, wherein

the capacity of the chamber is not less than ten times the volume of a liquid to be sucked.

23. (Withdrawn) The liquid suction method according to claim 20, wherein

a liquid to be sucked comprises a sample including whole blood, urine, and/or blood serum.

24. (Withdrawn) The liquid suction method according to claim 20, wherein

nucleic acid capturing containers provided with a solid phase capable of capturing nucleic acid are caused to communicate with the plurality of liquid suction portions, and nucleic acid is captured on the solid phase by sucking a liquid from each liquid suction portion.

25. (Withdrawn) A liquid suction method for sucking a liquid, using a plurality of chambers to individually communicate with a plurality of liquid suction portions, and a pump mechanism capable of controlling the pressure of each chamber, wherein a liquid is sucked from each liquid suction portion, the method comprising the steps of:

blocking each liquid suction portion and each chamber, and driving the pump mechanism, thereby depressurizing each chamber; and

blocking each chamber and the pump mechanism, and causing each chamber to come into communication with each liquid suction portion, thereby sucking a liquid from each liquid suction portion.

26. (Withdrawn) The liquid suction method according to claim 23, comprising the step of:

blocking each liquid suction portion and each chamber, causing each chamber to come into communication with the pump mechanism, and driving the pump, thereby sucking a liquid from each chamber.

27. (Withdrawn) The liquid suction method according to claim 23, wherein

the capacity of the chamber is not less than ten times the volume of a liquid to be sucked.

28. (Withdrawn) The liquid suction method according to claim 23, wherein

a liquid to be sucked comprises a sample including whole blood, urine, and/or blood serum.

29. (Withdrawn) The liquid suction method according to claim 26, wherein

nucleic acid capturing containers provided with a solid phase capable of capturing nucleic acid are caused to communicate with the plurality of liquid suction portions, and nucleic acid is captured on the solid phase by sucking a liquid from each liquid suction portion.